



GUILFORD
EDUCATION ALLIANCE



GUILFORD
County Schools

IGNITE

EXPLORING GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS
FALL 2018

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A Message from the Superintendent

Students come to us with a variety of passions and dreams for their futures. As educators, it is our job to ignite those passions and direct them toward potential career paths and a successful future.

I believe Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses are the key to starting many of our students out on the right path.

Did you know that more than 80 percent of manufacturers report that talent shortages will impact their ability to meet customer demand? These are highly-skilled, well-paying jobs that are going unfilled because companies can't find people trained to do the work.

That is where Guilford County Schools steps in. I am working closely with our local economic and academic leaders to build programs that will help meet the needs of companies and provide career pathways for our students.

We have a good base to start from. Programs across the district, including the Aviation Academy at Andrews and the Logistics program at Western High already are working alongside local industries to train students on state-of-the-art equipment and getting companies excited about the quality of potential employees graduating from GCS.

We have the Guilford Apprenticeship Program that allows students to receive on-the-job training, employment while still in school and the potential for free college tuition in the future.

Of course, there is always room for improvement. My Transition Team found that we may better serve our students by focusing more on the depth rather than breadth when it comes to our CTE offerings. We will better prepare students for post-secondary success by expanding the programs and practices that are already showing results and forming more public-private partnerships with businesses and universities.

Some of these goals will take an investment from the community. In its legislative agenda, the CTE department announced they will work toward providing funding to develop three high schools in Advanced Manufacturing, Health Careers and Design Innovation and Cybersecurity; we also plan to expand Project Lead the Way into all 23 middle schools; and implement 16 career pathways across the county.

These are all programs I have personally seen succeed in other districts. I know these could mean great success not only for our students, but for our local economy as well.

The cost of these programs is not insignificant, but the payoff may be far greater. For example, in Wisconsin, taxpayers receive \$12.20 in benefits for every dollar invested in the technical college system. In Washington, for every dollar invested in secondary CTE programs, taxpayers receive a \$9 return on investment. The list goes on.

In these pages you will see more examples of the quality education GCS is already providing our students and the benefits to our community. With everyone working together, we will ignite even more prosperity and success for us all.

In the interest of all children,

Sharon L. Contreras

Sharon L. Contreras, Ph.D.

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Publication sponsored by Guilford
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EXPLORING GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS FALL 2018



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Students in "Mr. M's" classes win national competitions, but leave is classes prepared for so much more.

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Student overcomes stereotypes to follow her dream of becoming an engineer.



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Community connections allow students to ignite their passions while helping the community as a whole.



The Winning Methods of Mr. M

During his 23 years of teaching at Weaver Academy, Reza Mohammadi often feels like a proud father.

He's helped 10 of his students win national competitions in various categories of computer engineering technology, and he's taken more than 50 of his students from Guilford County to that same national stage.

The competition is known as SkillsUSA Nationals, the Olympic trials for the country's top career and technical education students. To get there, students have to do well in North Carolina's SkillsUSA competition.

But to even compete at the state level, they had to get the green light from Mohammadi. And Mohammadi is meticulous.

He wants his students to be ready, and like some coaches before a big game, he puts them through all sorts of exercises in his cavernous classroom full of computers.

If they do well, Mohammadi knows what awaits his students. It could be a future where they can earn six-figure salaries and work for companies like Subaru, Cisco and Lockheed-Martin.

He's reminded of that future every time he walks into his classroom. It's right by the door. It's a bulletin board full of pictures and newspaper articles of his former students.

"I've accomplished something," he tells himself.

He has. More than his students really know.

Mohammadi left his home country of Iran 40 years ago to escape the political turmoil and to continue his education. He flew out on the last plane, he says, with only \$500 in his pocket and a small bag that contained a few clothes and an American dictionary.



He wants his students to be ready, and like some coaches before a big game, he puts them through all sorts of exercises in his cavernous classroom full of computers.



Mohammadi was 18. He came to the United States by himself. He was a math whiz who couldn't speak a word of English.

But he learned.

He ended up earning a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from West Virginia University and a master's degree in electrical engineering and applied math from N.C. A&T.

For six years at N.C. A&T, Mohammadi taught math and physics as an adjunct professor. But after seeing college students struggle with the basics of math, Mohammadi wanted to address the root of the problem – by helping high school students better understand math so they wouldn't struggle so much in college and beyond.

In 1995, Mohammadi came to Weaver. Today, Mohammadi teaches six different courses, ranging from cyber security to computer engineering. His students address him as "Mo," "Mr. M" or simply "Mohammadi."

"Just don't call me, 'Yo,'" Mohammadi often tells them.

There is a respect between Mohammadi and his students. They see him as a mentor who believes in their potential and their future.

They know that because his eyes widen and his speech rises and falls with excitement when he teaches. Then, when preparing them for an upcoming SkillsUSA competition, he'll stand on the other side of the classroom – and shout.

He wants them to gain confidence in their public speaking skills.

"When you tell me the problem," he'll tell them, "scream at me like you're in the shower."

His teaching methods have worked. Just ask Phillipe Jules, a rising senior from High Point.

Phillipe talks in a voice that rises barely above a whisper. Last spring, in the Internetworking One competition in SkillsUSA's North Carolina contest, Phillipe came in first place.

"He cares for his students because he always gives us a lot of his time," Phillipe says. "He's always willing to help."

Mohammadi is now 58, a married man with no children. He sees his students as his children. His bulletin board reminds him of that. So do the trophies and medals his students receive from SkillsUSA competitions.

He doesn't see them as hardware. He sees them as something else.

"I see the kids," he says, "and I think, 'Thank God, that kid finally made it.' I see them walk onstage, and afterward, they'll say, 'Mohammadi, thank you.' That means more to me than money."

Education is Everyone's Business

Vibrant public schools attract and retain industries. Schools with up-to-date technological tools and engaging instruction help develop the skills in students that a competitive and dynamic world demands.

When a community fully invests time, talent and resources in their public schools they put their community on a path of sustainable, equitable economic success. Business leaders and professionals have a critical role to play in helping students explore career paths and the world of work.

That is why Guilford Education Alliance (GEA) works hard to connect schools with the business and professional community.

Guilford County's business and professional leaders offer internships so students gain valuable hands-on work experience; volunteers help proctor exams, read to students, serve as mentors, lunch and reading buddies and participate in career days and the GCS World of Work expo. They donate funds that provide updated classroom equipment and supplies and lend their voices to important public policy discussions. To Guilford County's business community – thank you. For investing in our schools. For investing in our students. For investing in our future.

Sara Millard, general counsel and executive vice-president,
Arch MI and chair, GEA board.



“Strong public schools are a magnet to attract and retain the best talent in Greensboro, enabling us to recruit new employees and grow our business.”

Sara Millard, general counsel and executive vice-president, Arch MI and chair, GEA board



“Ilderton needs technicians, sales people, managers and administrative valued employees to continue our 90+ year business. Our community has many students who will contribute to the continued growth of our community.”

Tim Ilderton, president, Ilderton Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram, and a GEA Corporate Education Council member

“There is nothing more important to home values than the school house at the end of the street. Excellent public schools enhance the quality of life for everyone in our communities.”

Tony Jarrett, regional vice president, Allen Tate Realtors, GEA board member, and co-chair of the GEA Strategic Advocacy Team



“We saw a unique opportunity to develop programs that support families reinforcing education and core values. Our Big Brother Barber Programs have fostered open dialogue with the youth, barbers, police officers, business owners, educators and others willing to participate in barbershop talk.”

Dwayne Shaw and Rick Morton, Heads Up Beauty and Barber, co-chairs for Heads Up For Our Youth and 2018 Spark Award winners

“Lincoln Financial Group recognizes the success of our community is dependent upon the success of our schools. We encourage our employees to volunteer throughout the year to support our schools.”

Lumekia Winkleman, compliance consultant, Lincoln Financial Group and a GEA Corporate Education Council member

Gabie Ortega always loved building things.

She was no more than eight-years-old when her dad drove her to his construction job to watch. Gabie even helped him build a brick patio and a brick wall four-feet high and 15-feet long in their backyard.

Then there was the neighborhood kid across the street. She must've been no more than six.

Gabie would go over there and lose track of time, building houses and cars and entire neighborhoods out of Legos in the playroom. It became such an expected occurrence that her mom would come home, see Gabie gone and know right away.

Gabie's mom would walk across the street and ask, "Is Gabie here?"

She always was.

But even with this kind of hands-on experience, people would disparage her because of her gender, not because of her skill.

"I always heard, 'You're a girl. You can't do that,' and I didn't like that at all," she says today. "That made me so mad. Just because I'm a girl doesn't mean I can't do something."

That's how it began. She wanted to prove people wrong.

The Upside of Rejection

Gabie earned an outstanding achievement award in her engineering class at Southwest Guilford High School. Then, her sophomore year, she went to Weaver Academy for a few Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes.

She was excited because she wanted to learn as much as she could in Weaver's advanced courses in technical subjects. But her excitement soon waned.

In her first year, she found herself the only girl in an engineering class full of guys, and in the beginning, she was the last person picked for any project. She felt, as she says today, "like a scrawny kid being picked for dodge ball."

That soon changed. She remembers how. The paper plane she created flew the farthest – 13 feet. Soon, everyone in her class wanted to be on her team.

"I felt so great," she says. "I didn't say anything because I didn't want to be boastful. But I loved hearing, 'Gabie, let's be in your group.'"

The Resiliency of a Budding Engineer





Gabie's Dream Begins

It only got better when she took Weaver's core sustainable class.

She passed the class walking down the hall, and when she looked inside and saw students using all kinds of tools to build things, she told herself, "Get me into that class."

She did. She built a stool out of 2-by-4s and helped construct a tiny house on campus. Then, by the time he graduated in June from Southwest Guilford, Gabie had taken classes in engineering, construction and project management at Weaver.

She's now a freshman at N.C. A&T. She has a new plan.

She wants to graduate from N.C. A&T with a degree in engineering, get her master's at N.C. State and go after a doctorate at one of the best universities in the world – the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

At N.C. A&T, she has some financial help. A \$5,000 scholarship she earned by her first-place finish in an oratorical contest in January.

That contest was one of the biggest moments of her life.

The Need To Love, Not Judge

It was a Monday morning when Gabie stepped into High Point University's Community Center inside High Point's Oak Hollow Mall wearing a black-and-white dress she ordered from a Muslim website.

She was Latina, a Muslim, and she wanted everyone to know she was proud of who she was.

She was one of five finalists competing in the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Breakfast, sponsored by High Point University and the Ministers Conference of High Point and Vicinity, and she wrote a speech around the theme, "Where do we go from here?"

In front of a crowd of 400, Gabie talked for 10 minutes about her dream of becoming an engineer. She mentioned being ostracized in class because of her gender and emphasized that America needs to take Dr. King's lessons to heart and learn to love, not judge.

When Gabie finished, she got a standing ovation.

She keeps the ticket from the Jan. 15 event in her family's minivan she drives. It's in a compartment in the driver-side door.

Why? Like her future, she has an answer. She wants to see that ticket every day.

For her, that's inspiration. That keeps her going.

Growing with Industry

Working with local industries to understand the skills and jobs they need filled, and then preparing students to fill those well-paying and desirable positions is an easy and obvious path to set up students for success. Below are just a few ways GCS and businesses are working together to help both the companies and our students be successful.

Andrews Aviation Academy

For years, Andrews Aviation Academy has combined traditional academics with pilot training and avionics. Then, in 2016 the program expanded to include aerospace engineering and maintenance to meet the needs of this growing industry in the Triad, adding a second workshop this past fall thanks to a \$40,000 grant from the Cemala Foundation.

"The more hands on they get, the better off they will be on the job, because they will already have experience with the tools," explained Academy Director David Mayers. "These tools are FAA standards, and I expect our students to produce work that complies with those standards."

In the 2018-19 school year, the program will add a CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machine, provided by a \$35,000 grant from Cemala Foundation. The machine will build components designed by students.

"They will have hands on experience, so even if they decide to go into the design and engineering side of it, they will have that floor experience to know how the components and designs will actually be put together. Most people don't have that," said Mayers.

Mayers works closely with local companies, including HAECO and Honda Aircraft, having taught the licensure class at GTCC required to work for Honda Aircraft. He says the need for these positions is huge, to the point that his high school job shadow students have all been offered jobs at local companies.

"Everyone needs to benefit," said Mayers. "Our students need to learn something from the experience, and the companies need to know that when they're done, they have a good pool of candidates to fill their positions."

Andrews Aviation Academy students work to build an industry standard airplane wing.



Western Logistics

Western High Director of Logistics Education Art Close says he's setting up a pipeline for his students to get good paying jobs, right out of high school, one that will also set them up for success in college and career in the years ahead.

"What companies are finding is that it's better to hire someone who spent time actually handling the product, talking to the customer and who then goes to college with a knowledge of how to use what they're learning, than it is to hire someone from Stanford without that experience," explained Close.

In Close's courses, students manage inventory for the school, load pallets and drive a forklift, and work with industry-standard shelving and materials. This gives them hands-on experience in careers with a lot of options.

"We're looking specifically at logistics and supply chain," said Close. "There are six job openings for every applicant in the Greensboro-Triad area. That's why my students start at \$10.50 an hour as a 16 year old who has never had a job."



Close says as students gain more experience through his class, part-time work, internships and apprenticeships they could be hired for jobs paying \$18 an hour.

"That's \$36,000 a year right out of high school," said Close. "If they do well and still want to go for college, the companies will pay for it."

In fact, companies are so excited about the students in Close's class, they donate industry standard, and state of the art equipment to the program so students will have that experience.

"They can pick up a penny off the floor and drop it into the opening of a bottle with a similar diameter," said Close. "That's how good they are when they leave here."

Guilford Apprenticeship Partners (GAP)

Helping students get paid, on-the-job training in highly-skilled and hard-to-fill positions is the purpose of the Guilford Apprenticeship Partners (GAP).

Starting with five companies in 2016, the program has grown to 26 employers looking to hire high school apprentices to help fill the holes in their workforce.

"All of us who got together to start this had the same need. There's a shortage of highly-skilled hourly technical positions, no matter what industry you're in," explained Todd Poteat, vice president of manufacturing at Bright Plastics, one of the first five partners. "We saw this as a way to establish a pipeline of these highly-skilled hourly technicians. It's good for the companies and it's also the right thing to do for the students and the community."

In addition to bringing on new companies looking for trained employees, the partnership is also expanding the career paths students can follow. Originally focusing on advanced manufacturing careers, this year the program added service industries, including plumbing, electrical and HVAC technicians. They say the aviation industry may be the next to join.

"What the GAP model brings is retention. Most all of these programs in high schools or community colleges suffer from lack of graduation rates. The GAP model tends to make sure we have much higher retention rates because the student has to go through so many hurdles to get into the program. Their desire and attention to detail to get in the program separates them from the pack," said Poteat. "We don't want kids that can't go to college. We want kids who find learning by doing is the best method for them to learn."

Apprentice Phillip Fuller is in his second year of the program at Bright Plastics. Fuller says it was well worth the effort he put into the application.

"The biggest thing to me is to be proactive," said Fuller. "The process is long and it's very fast paced. You just have to be on top of everything."

Fuller does plan to go to college to become an engineer. Poteat says as long as Fuller stays in the program, Bright Plastics, like many of the GAP companies, will help pay for that college education.

At the end of the day, Poteat said GAP is successful because of its two rules: The students come first and every employer must be successful.



Top: Phillip Fuller, 2017 High Point Central High graduate, is in his second year of the GAP program working at Bright Plastics, a plastic fabrication company.

Bottom: Senior Diana Nolasco drives a forklift in her Logistics class at Western High.

Project Lead the Way



Dudley High student Taneja Baldwin prepares an experiment in her engineering course.

“This class was probably one of the most beneficial classes in all my years,” said Roney. “Also, Mr. Gates is the best teacher, because of what he’s done for us. He proofreads emails and helps connect us to the people we need to make the project work.”

Guilford County Schools works to find successful programs and expand them throughout the county. One example is Project Lead the Way, a curriculum that requires not only passion and dedication from students, but the teachers as well.

Project Lead the Way is currently utilized in several high schools and one middle school in GCS, including Dudley High and Weaver Academy. Students may study computer science or engineering with Project Lead the Way’s curriculum.

“Usually the teachers have a professional background in the field, and then there is basically a two-week boot camp you have to go through for each course to be certified to teach Project Lead the Way,” said Weaver Teacher Jeffrey Gates.

“We go through the entire class, and all of the projects for the semester in that two weeks,” added Dudley Teacher Donald Sweeper. “That way we’ve done everything we are asking the students to do so we are better equipped to work with them in the classroom. It also gives you the freedom to adjust the curriculum toward your students’ needs.”

The usual pathway students follow through Project Lead the Way is two foundational courses, an optional course and finally a capstone project during a student’s junior or senior year. The capstone project allows the students to identify a problem and work to come up with and engineer their own solution.



The courses are so popular at Dudley, the school is certifying a second Project Lead the Way teacher to help more students complete the program.

In Gates' class, one team worked on improvements to law enforcement Kevlar vests.

"My father is an ex-police officer and I have a half-brother stationed in South Korea," said Daniel Roney, a senior. "We were talking to them about how their vests protect them, but they're heavy and if you're hit you still suffer injuries like broken ribs. We want to create a lighter weight vest that distributes the impact so there are fewer injuries."

Near the end of the final semester, the team was working to build the vest and reaching out to local colleges and universities to find a secure space to test their product.

"This class was probably one of the most beneficial classes in all my years," said Roney. "Also, Mr. Gates is the best teacher, because of what he's done for us. He proofreads emails and helps connect us to the people we need to make the project work."

Left: Dudley High's Donald Sweeper works with engineering students Hezekiah Curtis and Barrett Crawford.

Right: Weaver students reverse engineer a building block in Jeffrey Gates' Project Lead the Way Engineering and Computer Programming class at Weaver Academy.



Gates is proud of his students and says they're what keeps him from going back into the private sector. He also said the Project Lead the Way really does make a difference in preparing his students for whatever comes next.

"My son is in engineering at N.C. State, and he says they're doing some of the things I teach in this class," said Gates.

"These courses are made to take the place of your Freshman engineering courses," confirmed Sweeper, who also works for N.C. A&T State University. "That's how intense and serious it is. It can save these students a semester of work."

"I remember on my first day of engineering school the professors would say 'Turn to your left, and now your right. Only one of you will make it all four years.' These courses will help our students be that one student, or better yet, make the odds two of three instead. That really is the goal of Project Lead the Way," said Gates.

The courses are so popular at Dudley, the school is certifying a second Project Lead the Way teacher to help more students complete the program.

The CTE department also included implementing Project Lead the Way in all 23 middle schools in its 2018 Legislative Agenda.

"That would be extremely helpful," said Sweeper. "It will increase the chances we start with students who know this is what they want to do, instead of working to pull them from the ground up."

Igniting student passions is a joint effort between schools, families, businesses and non-profit organizations. Thanks to those partnerships, GCS students gain opportunities to find those passions as well as give back to their communities. Below are just a few examples.

Junior Achievement Inspires Construction Academy

More than 500 GCS eighth-grade students received hands-on experiences that introduce them to a number of construction career options at the first Junior Achievement Inspire Construction Academy, sponsored by the Greensboro Builders Association and Junior Achievement.

Industry leaders say a labor shortage is putting a strain on construction in North Carolina. Their hope was to show young people the jobs that will be available to them, including well-paying positions working with new technology.

"There's a lot that's going to 'wow' an eighth grader, which is really the purpose behind it," said Ron Foister, Greensboro Builders Association and Ron Foister Custom Homes. "The neat thing about it is we're exposing them, it's that one touch that we have with a kid that may wind up creating a construction industry leader in the future."

Event organizers said they were very pleased with the interest shown by students and hope to make it an annual event.

Northwest Nursing Students Offer Eye Exams

Pre-nursing students at Northwest High use what they learn in class to help fellow students by offering vision screenings in GCS elementary schools.

The students in Patsy Long's nursing fundamentals class go through a three-hour training with "Prevent Blindness" in Raleigh before conducting the screenings so they know what to look for and when they need to refer the student to someone else. It gives the students hands-on experience with patients.

"I actually enjoy it a lot," said Katelyn Durham, a graduate of Northwest High. "I like working with little kids and it's something that I want to do when I get older."

In addition to the experience, the students are also helping lift some of the burden from school nurses, most of whom cover multiple schools.

"In Guilford County all first, fourth and seventh graders must have a vision screening," explained Long, who retired this year. "It's very difficult for the school nurse to check all of those. We've checked as many as almost 400 in one session, and you try to get a school nurse to get through 400 students. It's almost an impossibility."

In addition to giving back, many of these students will become certified nursing assistants, well on their way to following their dreams in the healthcare profession.





Weaver Builds Tiny Houses

Career and Technical Education students at Weaver Academy were honored to build the first Tiny House in a new Greensboro development.

The new community is being built on a half-acre lot on Causey Street, and the Weaver students designed and built the first 250-square-foot home in one year. The plan is for five to six homes to fill the lot, providing a new start for people currently without homes.

In addition, because all the funds to build the house were donated, the home itself could be donated to the cause.

"It speaks really about students feeling an accomplishment," said Scott Jones, executive board chairman of Tiny Houses Greensboro. "Not just going to school just to learn, but to actually have the accomplishment of something that you've done to return back to the community and benefit those in need."

Enrichment Fund Helps Students at Dudley and Western Highs

Thanks to the financial support of The Enrichment Fund for Guilford County Schools, well-prepared, career and technical education students received the benefits of real-world, hands-on, up-front learning and experiences for the future.

The mission of The Enrichment Fund is to provide financial support to enhance the educational programs of Guilford County Schools, aid students needing financial assistance with enrichment opportunities, and encourage and reward creativity, innovation and outstanding teaching. The 25-year-old non-profit organization also strives to support Career and Technical Education competition and vital, academic-based field trips to augment classroom work.

For Dudley High, funds permitted teams of inspired and dedicated students to compete in Shell's Eco-Marathon during the past couple of years in Detroit and California. With the funding, more students participated, allowing them to accompany the innovative vehicles they designed and built from recycled and modified materials.

Across town at Western High, North Carolina's only and highly regarded global logistics program, and one of eight in the United States, could send more students to premier conferences and industry exhibition in Chicago and Atlanta where they could see the expanding world of supply chain dynamics in action.

Recognizing the enduring value of CTE, the Enrichment Fund is seeking additional funding from private industry to expand grants to assist and enhance their personal and career paths. For more information:

www.enrichmentfund.org



Top: Dudley High's 2017 Advanced Vehicle Technology (AVT) Team.

Bottom left: Career and Technical Education students at Weaver Academy built the first Tiny House in a new Greensboro development for the homeless. **Bottom right:** Eighth-grade students experiment with a number of construction career options at the Junior Achievement Inspire Construction Academy.



BB&T Support Goes Above and Beyond

“The quality of an organization’s performance cannot exceed the quality of its leadership.”

Dr. James. N. Farr

In 1956, Dr. James Farr introduced his approach to leadership development to the world and generations of leaders since have succeeded through the insights and life-changing principles of Farr’s program.

BB&T – a corporate leader and public school champion in our community – first connected with James Farr as a client. Farr became a BB&T subsidiary in 1994 and the new campus for the BB&T Leadership Institute in Guilford County is a natural evolution of Farr’s world-class approach to leadership development.

As part of its mission, the BB&T Leadership Institute provides leadership development, tuition-free, to principals of pre-k through 12th grade public schools.

Programs are also offered to educational leaders in North Carolina, South Carolina and Kentucky with plans to expand to each state in the BB&T footprint.

“BB&T understands that we can’t have great schools that prepare students for a dynamic and competitive world without great leaders in our schools,” said Winston McGregor, executive director of Guilford Education Alliance (GEA). “They’re helping principals build the skills they need to provide students the support they need.”

“We also know that BB&T doesn’t just talk the talk of leadership, they walk the walk,” added Louise Courts, GEA’s director of development.

When Courts got a call from BB&T in March, she was thrilled.



“BB&T volunteers immediately showed up and kept coming, day after day, week after week, to help us take in supplies, inventory them and then get them into the hands of the teachers who most needed them.”

“The Greensboro office had chosen us as a volunteer site for the spring,” said Courts. “But when I got that call I really had no idea what kind of amazing impact they would ultimately have.”

Then the April tornado hit. Three elementary schools in East Greensboro were severely damaged. When the sun rose the next morning, it was clear that the schools would not be able to open for the rest of the year. Almost everything in the schools had been destroyed. With this kind of extreme damage, GCS officials knew that relocation was only the first step in getting students back to school as quickly as possible

Within 24 hours, GEA had mobilized to start collecting supply donations and monetary donations for the tornado damaged schools. GEA operates the Teacher Supply Warehouse throughout the year to provide classroom supplies to GCS teachers at no-cost, but the needs of the damaged schools were over and above what the warehouse normally could provide.



“We reached out to the community to ask for help and suddenly supply donations began pouring into the Teacher Supply Warehouse,” said Courts. “BB&T volunteers immediately showed up and kept coming, day after day, week after week, to help us take in supplies, inventory them and then get them into the hands of the teachers who most needed them.”

BB&T also made several donations to GEA’s Tornado Relief fund, including a check for \$10,000 in the first days after the storm.

The BB&T volunteers were participating in the company’s annual Lighthouse Project, which allows employees to choose their own projects in their own communities to make the world a better place. Once a team decides

what they are most passionate about, they pick an organization to work with – in this case, Guilford Education Alliance. BB&T then provides the funding and time away from the office or branch for BB&T associates to support those projects in a “hands-on” fashion. Since 2009, associates have contributed more than 500,000 volunteer hours and improved the quality of life for more than 15 million people.

“We see these investments in our public schools as an investment in the future of our community and it’s one of the best ways we live out our BB&T mission to make the world a better place to live,” said Ford Bowers, Greensboro market president and senior vice-president at BB&T.

What Else is Happening in GCS

Superintendent Appointed to Network of National Education Leaders

Superintendent Sharon L. Contreras appointed to a diverse, bipartisan network of state and district top leaders dedicated to supporting policies that prioritize students' needs. She is one of four new members of [Chiefs for Change](#), which plays an important role in national and state-level efforts to promote policies and practices that serve students.

Members lead education systems that collectively have approximately 7 million students, 435,000 teachers and 14,000 schools. The group has 31 members, 25 of whom are actively serving as chiefs.

The group's advocacy agenda is focused on four key areas: equitable access to outstanding schools; high-quality curriculum and the supports for teachers to use it effectively; college affordability and completion; and safe, and welcoming schools where children are free to learn without fear.

"In Guilford County, we are transforming our campuses so that every child has access to a great school close to home. It's an essential component of our strategic plan, and our community is engaging in important discussions about equity for all students," Contreras said. "Chiefs for Change is leading similar conversations at the national level, and I am excited to support this critical work."

GCS Selected as the First World Kindness District by World Kindness USA

GCS is honored to be named the first World Kindness District by World Kindness USA.

Guilford County Schools was selected for its commitment to seeking the kinder option in all decision-making processes for the good of all people.

Research says that, kindness is one of the most important habits we can develop on our journey to sustainable happiness. It is an essential key to life: one in which we remain healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally. Kindness costs little but pays huge dividends in our own lives and in the lives of those we touch.

The World Kindness Movement (WKM) is an international movement formed in 1997 during a conference on World Kindness Day. WKM is now recognized as the peak global body for kindness and is a platform for collaboration and sharing. The mission of the WKM is to inspire individuals towards greater kindness by connecting nations to create a kinder world.

GCS Introduces New Math Curriculum

GCS introduced a new 6-8 grade math curriculum in all middle schools this year. Called Open Up Math, it has been rated as the top middle school math curriculum in the country. All students will receive printed workbooks for each unit in the curriculum. Its family and student sections provide sample problems with detailed solutions, activities and practice problems to use in class and for homework.

The math curriculum aligns with Goal II of the district's Strategic Plan – to increase the percentage of incoming sixth-graders passing N.C. Math 1 (Algebra 1) with a C or better by the end of their ninth-grade year to 75 percent by 2022. It is currently 69.8 percent.

Career and Technical Education Staff Member Earns State Recognition

A key member of the district's Career and Technical Education (CTE) team was recently named one of the best in the state. Cheryl Hepburn, the district's CTE instructional management coordinator, was selected as the North Carolina Instructional Management Coordinator of the Year by the Department of Public Instruction.

The award recognizes those who exhibit the leadership, communication and teamwork skills that are inherent in providing high-quality support, who display integrity, knowledge and ethics, and who share problem-solving techniques with others. Hepburn supports the more than 300 CTE teachers in the district.

Two Schools Teach in Multiple Languages

In an effort to lower achievement gaps and increase overall academic proficiency, two elementary schools are piloting a program to teach in multiple languages. Hunter Elementary and Allen Jay Elementary will begin to teach a portion of students in Spanish or Urdu about 50 percent of the time.

Unlike an immersion program, a dual language program is not designed to teach a foreign language. Rather, its focus is to teach the original subject matter using the target language. About 60 students at Allen Jay Elementary will be taught in English and Spanish or English and Urdu, and about 30 students at Hunter Elementary will be taught in English and Spanish. The program will begin with kindergarten students.

Studies show that students in dual-language programs are more likely than their peers to be classified as English proficient by grade 6. Students in dual-language programs also outperform their peers on standardized tests.

Both Hunter and Allen Jay have more than 120 students for whom English is not their first language.

Two GCS Schools Earn State Recognition for Energy Conservation Efforts

Two GCS schools are taking energy conservation and education to the next level. Energy WISE teams from Monticello-Brown Summit Elementary and Southern High received state and national awards through the [National Energy Education Development](#) project (NEED).

Energy WISE uses student-led teams to identify and reduce energy waste in schools and educate students, staff and the community about energy conservation.

Through the work of their Energy WISE teams, these two schools were named state-level NEED schools of the year – the only two schools to be recognized from North Carolina. Southern High was also a runner-up for National Senior School of the Year. This is the sixth time Southern High has won the state-level award.

Southern High Science Teacher and Energy WISE Advisor Mark Case also received the Bob Thompson Excellence in Energy Education Award. The award was created by NEED in memory of long-time NEED teacher and staff member Bob Thompson and is given each year to a teacher who exemplifies Thompson's childlike wonder of science, technology and energy.

The award includes a \$1,000 cash grant to the teacher to use in the classroom and an all-expenses paid trip to the NEED Energy Conference for Educators.

Program Promotes Service-learning as a Core Value

To date, 8,974 GCS students have graduated with a service-learning recognition since the inception of the district's high school service-learning program in 2010. National studies have shown that students who engage in service-learning feel more connected to their schools and communities. Studies have also shown that they are more academically engaged, have better attendance and demonstrate more positive behaviors at school.

Over the past eight years, GCS high school students have contributed 2,117,538 hours of service. This translates to more than \$51,117,379 of an economic impact that GCS students have contributed within the community.

Thirty-two percent, or 1,723, of the district's entire graduating class earned at least 100 hours of service this past school year.

Three schools had 100 percent of its seniors recognized for completing at least 100 hours of service: The Academy at Smith, The Early College at Guilford and STEM Early College at N.C. A&T State University.

Dudley High had 218 of its 325 seniors receive service-learning recognitions, the highest number of any school in the district. Principal Rodney Wilds said this year his students contributed to tornado and hurricane relief efforts, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, Lay-ups for Lupus, a charity basketball tournament, and a breast cancer awareness walk.

Upcoming Events Sponsored by Guilford Parent Academy

COURSE	DATE
Elementary Math – Eureka Math Info. Session	Oct. 1, Oct. 4
Exceptional Children 101	Oct. 3
Governor's School Information Session	Oct. 4
Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Notebook (Make & Take)	Oct. 8, Oct. 15, Oct. 22, Oct. 29
Sandy Hook Promise – Know the Signs	Oct. 9, Oct. 11
College Planning Workshop Series: Session II	Oct. 10
Cash for College, Financial Aid & Scholarships	Oct. 10
Finish the FAFSA	Oct. 16
Charting on a Bell Curve: How to Track Your Child's Progress (Special Education Students)	Nov. 5, Nov. 19, Nov. 26
College Planning Series: Session III	Nov. 8
The Application Process: A Step by Step Approach	Nov. 8
Holiday Reading with Curious George featuring Children's Author Dr. Kimberly Johnson	Dec. 11
Academically Gifted (AG) Transitions to Middle School	Jan. 8
Academically Gifted (AG) Transitions to High School	Jan. 15

For more information including times and locations on any of these FREE workshops, visit the Guilford Parent Academy page at www.gcsnc.com, call 336-279-4924 or email parentacademy@gcsnc.com.

Guilford Parent Academy is sponsored by Guilford County Schools, the U.S. Department of Education and more than 70 business and community partners.

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In compliance with federal laws, Guilford County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law. Refer to the Board of Education's Discrimination Free Environment Policy AC for a complete statement. Inquiries or complaints should be directed to the Guilford County Schools Compliance Officer, 120 Franklin Blvd., Greensboro, NC 27401; 336.370.2323.

All Guilford County Schools facilities, both educational and athletic, are tobacco-free learning environments.

712 N. Eugene Street
Greensboro, North Carolina 27401
337.370.8100

www.gcsnc.com



A photograph of two young students, a boy and a girl, wearing white lab coats. The boy is wearing a yellow hard hat with "Student STEM Academy" written on it. They are both smiling and looking at a red robot in front of them. The robot has a black and white striped wheel. In the background, other students and adults are visible, suggesting a school event or competition.

**“The future
depends on
what you
do today.”**

MAHATMA
GANDHI